

“Pharaoh”

“If you can guess what’s in my pocket, you can have it”, said the man in the Kiton suit. “I don’t know what’s in your pocket but I would appreciate some help, I haven’t eaten since Tuesday” replied the squatting panhandler. “I wonder whose fault that might be”, remarked the suit as he peered down his nose at the poor soul. “Mister, I can only blame myself”, the beggar replied. “Well, you seem to have the right perspective at least”, said the suit. “Well, I’m glad you see that, at least”, responded the mendicant. Checking the time on his Rolex, the suit says, “I have a few spare minutes and I’m awfully curious. What’s your story”? Seemly bewildered, the indigent said “Seriously? You want to hear my story? Why”? “Because I don’t have anything else better to do”, replied the suit. The bum thinks about it and said, “Alright, since you are so awfully curious. Where shall I begin”? “Start at the beginning” suggested the suit. “My name is Ben by the way” he added. “Very well Ben” said the tramp, “from the beginning and my name is Joe by the way, I would shake your hand but I wouldn’t want to mess up your manicure”. “Thanks Joe, you are very considerate, I just had them done”, Ben said as he admired his polished nails. Joe leans back, looks up at the sky and begins. “Well! You see Benjamin I’m the oldest of nine children. My mentally challenged Father was a janitor at a factory and an alcoholic at home, my Mother on the other hand was a genius. She worked as a freelance seamstress and was a drug addict. I had five brothers, two of which were twins and three sisters, triplets. I had to drop out of school to take care of them. I did everything that needed to be done. I was only ten years old. My Father lost his job when the factory relocated to China. The situation at home became so bad, my parents had to put us up for adoption but just two of the triplets were ever actually adopted”. “What about your parents?” asked Ben? Joe averts his eyes and pauses like this question hurts him to even think about and then continues. “The guilt was too much for them, they died suddenly, just two months apart. Mom overdosed, Dad with a heart attack, leaving us on the street. And here my friend is where I’ve been ever since. My brothers are dead”. “What about the triplets Joe”? Ben asks. “Doreen and Maureen grew up in Rhode Island. They both are Doctors now” Joe said proudly. “Floreen is a prostitute over on 8th and Grand. If it wasn’t for Flo, I’d be dead. In desperate times, she feeds me. I’ll introduce you to her, if you like.” “How did your brothers die Joe”? Ben asked. Joe responding with bitter tears in his eyes, “From living on the streets Ben, how do you think? Nobody survives this life, nobody. You know what? Keep whatever it is you have in your pocket. In fact, stick it where the sun doesn’t shine, now go away”. Both touched and ashamed, Ben reaches into his pocket retrieving two crisp one hundred dollar bills and hands them to Joe. “I never guessed what was in your pocket”, Joe said. “I’ll give you another hundred if you can”, said Ben. Joe smiles, looks up at him and said “you have a set of car keys in your pocket”. “Your right”, Ben said and handed him the hundred and walks off, then turns and comes back waving another hundred in his hand. “Yours if you can tell me what kind of a car they go to”. Joe thinks about it for a second and said “they belong to a Bentley Mulsanne”. “Wrong!” Ben chimed triumphantly and walks away but then turns around again and comes back and hands Joe the bill. “Close enough” Ben said, “It’s a Bentley alright but it’s an Azure” and he walks away. Brandishing a smile, Joe yelled, “Thank you so much”. Then looking to make sure Ben was gone, Joe pulls a cell phone out and makes a call. “Hello. Alice? It’s Ted. I’ve already made my quota and then some. Call Skeleton and tell him to bring over four grams of his best stuff. Tell Bob and Carol to be at our place in an hour for some fun.